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# An Appeal

TO

*The Descendants of General Nathanael  
Greene for His Remains and to Con-  
gress for a Monument Over These  
at Guilford Battle Ground, North  
Carolina.*

BY

JOSEPH M. MOREHEAD,

ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE GUILFORD BATTLE GROUND  
COMPANY,

GREENSBORO, N. C., APRIL, 1902.





# *AN APPEAL*

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By JOSEPH M. MOREHEAD,  
ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE GUILFORD BATTLE GROUND  
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# To the Descendants of Gen. Nathanael Greene :

Since the recently exhumed remains of General Greene now rest, properly encased in copper, within the vault of a city bank, and since the location of their final reinterment now devolves upon the decision of his descendants, I wish respectfully and under the circumstances, urgently to submit to their consideration the following thoughts and convictions:

[Charlotte [N. C.] Observer, March 16, 1902.]

“Seven ancient cities claimed the Homer dead  
In which the living Homer begged his bread.”

While this parallel does not in all respects apply to Gen. Nathanael Greene, who was honored in his life as well as after his death, nevertheless Rhode Island and Georgia are quarrelling for the honor of his final resting place. A solution of the difficulty is presented by Col. Jos. M. Morehead, of Greensboro, in today's paper. He forcibly points out that the remains of the great soldier should lie in Guilford Battle Ground's soil, the scene of the decisive battle which turned Cornwallis back to the South, which made Yorktown possible and which was the greatest battle Greene ever fought. It is the eternal fitness of things that he should be buried at Guilford.

## GENERAL GREENE'S REMAINS.

### RHODE ISLAND—GEORGIA QUARREL.

*Mr. Morehead, the Vice President of the Guilford Battle Ground Association, Pours Oil on the Troubled Waters, —He Prays for a Deliverance from a Squabble Over the Final Resting Place of the Dust of the Revolutionary Hero, and Suggests a Compromise—A Practical Solution of the Trouble—Some History Reviewed—The Remains Should Finally Rest at Guilford.*

*To the Editor of The Observer:*

From your issue of last Sunday it appears that bad feeling has to an extent arisen over the final resting place of General Greene's body, between our sister States of Rhode Island and Georgia.

This, with me, has excited not only profound regret but it is clothed with a melancholly acute as profound. For the sake of "Auld Lang Syne," for humanity's sake and for the "Lord's sake" don't let anything appertaining to Nathanael Greene breed a "quarrel" between Rhode Island and any other State of the Union—especially any State of the Revolutionary Southern department. In the Revolutionary war Rhode Island gave the country, and especially its Southern department, a general second in devotion to the cause to none and second in ability to Washington only. The Southern department furnished Rhode Island's general troops that secured to him a fame second only to that of the Father of his Country.

I believe that Greene's campaign of 1780-81 ought to rank, but that it does not rank, certainly among the finest military achievements of all the ages.

It is true that in point of numbers troops do not here appear as elsewhere, but danger, difficulty, heroism and genius, in both the ranks and leadership, do appear.

Early in 1780 Great Britain determined to transfer the seat of hostilities from the New York or Northern department to the Southern, embracing little Delaware southward to Georgia. Clinton's Narrative and Cornwallis's Answer thereto let us completely behind the scenes and show that the plan was to subjugate the Carolinas and Virginia and to hold these as the future might dictate. In pursuance of this plan Clinton, commander-in-chief of the British forces in America, captured Charleston, with all North Carolina's regulars, in May, 1780. Earl Cornwallis, lieutenant general, then left in command of this department and supplied with all of everything he deemed necessary and desired, gained the decisive, and to the American cause, the disastrous battle of Camden in August.

This, in the sixth year of a trying and exhaustive war in which this State had lost as prisoners or buried all its regulars from the Hudson to Savannah, left between the country and subjugation nothing but the fortitude and courage of North Carolina's militia.

King's Mountain was fought in October, 1780, before Greene's arrival and taking command in December following. Of the battle of King's Mountain Gen. Henry V. Boynton recently declared in a public address, "There is nothing finer in the romance of war." He had just said: "North Carolina had only her militia with which to resist invasion. All along her southern horizon the sky was as black as midnight in a tropical storm. Did North Carolina quail? Let King's Mountain answer; let Cowpens testify! Let Guilford battlefield respond!

"There is no more honorable chapter in Revolutionary history than that which covers the time from Cornwallis's appearance on the southern border of North Carolina until the fires of patriotism flamed high on King's Mountain."

In the above, Mr. Editor, your appreciative reader will discover strong language and pronounced eulogy.

But all who have read the recent productions of General Boynton's pen will, in my opinion, accord to him a standing among our modern historians, at least of the highest respectability and trustworthiness. What he said is truth.

In the "Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution," issued under authority of Congress in 1890, as I remember, we read, volume 4, page 363, John Adams to Benjamin Franklin (Paris):

"Leyden, Holland, April 16, 1781.—I think the Southern States will have the honor, after all, of putting this continent in the right way of finishing the business of the war. There has been more sheer fighting there in proportion than anywhere."

Page 419, Adams to Franklin (Amsterdam):

"May 16, 1781.—The news from the Southern States of America of continual fighting, in which our countrymen have done themselves great honor, has raised the spirit of Holland from that unmanly gloom and despondency into which they had been thrown by defeats by the English."

Page 802, Robert Livingstone, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to Dana, in Europe:

"Philadelphia, October 22, 1781.—I have the pleasure of communicating to you the important account of the signal victories lately obtained over the enemy in these quarters: One by General Greene, which has been followed by the re-establishment of the governments of South Carolina and of Georgia. The other at Yorktown. You will not fail to make the best use of this intelligence, which must fix our independence not only beyond all doubt, but even beyond all controversy."

Page 817, Robert Morris to General Greene:

"Office of Finance, November 2, 1781.—Your favor of the 17th of September last has been delivered to me. I hope it is unnecessary to make assurances of my dispo-



sition to render your situation both easy and respectable." "I have neither forgotton nor neglected your department. I have done the utmost to provide clothing, arms, accoutrements, medicines, hospital stores, etc., and I flatter myself that you will receive through the different departments both benefit and relief from my exertions. \* \* \* \* \* You have done so much with so little that my wishes to increase your activity have every possible stimulus."

Beyond doubt Guilford was the most important battle embraced within all this fighting. King's Mountain and Cowpens by no means drove Cornwallis from his original plan and purpose of capturing North Carolina and Virginia. But they conduced tremendously to the triumph here achieved; just as the release of South Carolina and Georgia flowed from it. Upon receipt of the news of the "victory" in Parliament Charles James Fox who loved people and who hated war, pronounced the best commentary that has been or can be upon this battle. Mr. Fox said that the results to Cornwallis of the "victory" were indential with those that would have been caused by defeat.

In Tarleton's Campaigns, page 320, we read the following extracts from a letter of General Greene's to Washington—the battle having been fought March 15th.

"Greene's Headquarters, Ramsey's, Deep River,

"March 30, 1781.

"I wrote to you the 23d instant from Buffalo Creek (South Guilford), since which we have been in pursuit of the enemy with the determination to bring them to action again. On the 27th we arrived at Rigden's ford, 12 miles above this, and found the enemy then lay at Ramsey's. Our army was put in motion without loss of time, but we found the enemy had crossed some hours before our arrival and with such precipitation that they had left their dead unburied upon the ground."

Tarleton says, pages 279 and 280: "The British ob-

tained information that General Greene's army had reached Buffalo Creek, southward of Guilford Court House. The day before the King's troops arrived at Ramsey's the Americans insulted the Yagers in their encampment. The Royalists remained a few days at Ramsey's for the benefit of the wounded and to complete a bridge over Deep River, when the light troops of the Americans again disturbed the pickets," etc., etc.

"The British crossed the river and the same day Gen. Greene reached Ramsey's with the intention to attack them. The halt of the King's troops at that place nearly occasioned an action, which would not probably have been advantageous to the royal forces on account of the position and the disheartening circumstance of their being encumbered with so many wounded officers and men since the action at Guilford."

Stedman, perhaps the most reliable historian of the period—British or American—vouches for the general accuracy of Tarleton's Campaigns. The most unique commentary, account or criticism upon or of any battle whatever, that I ever saw, is that of Stedman himself upon the battle of Guilford. It is a literary curiosity as well as a curiosity historical. He says: "Thus we find that the battle of Guilford drew after it some, and it will afterwards appear that it was followed by all the consequences of something nearly allied to a defeat." So will the conscientious squirm when too hard pressed.

Guilford was the field of Greene's fame.

With respectful and I trust due regard for the natural feelings and wishes of all concerned, Gen. Greene's connections, Georgians and Rhode Islanders—I nevertheless submit that the silent dead have rights that the living are bound to respect. Gen. Greene's remains ought to repose at Guilford—"The Field of His Fame"—and patriots from Maine to Texas ought here to erect a suitable monument to his memory.

The Guilford Battle Ground Company or Association

owes not one dollar. The beautiful park itself contains about one hundred acres of piedmont hill and vale, fairly improved and adorned as to its groves and meadows and abundant water with canopied founts, dams, grass plots, buildings, museum and sixteen monuments, some with elegant bronze tablets and statuary. The title to these grounds has been examined, approved, paid for and the deeds recorded. It lies in the direct line of travel from New York to New Orleans and is traversed by the great Southern Railway. It is imbedded in the hearts of North Carolinians, many, many of whose progenitors fought here. It is fostered by the State's Legislature, by individuals and by the several railroads centering here to the full extent allowed by law. The thrifty and rapidly growing city of Greensboro, in whose suburbs it lies, annually affords the State a grand outing upon the grounds, where the living and dead speakers of the land address the people and where all are made happier men and better because wiser citizens of the republic.

We tender a noble site for a tomb to Greene, in the midst of this Revolutionary battle-field, where his efforts conduced so largely to the amelioration of the condition of mankind.

JOSEPH M. MOREHEAD,  
Vice-President Guilford Battle Ground Association.

## Appeal to Congress.

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[Greensboro [N. C.] Telegram, March 14, 1902.

All success to Major Morehead in his efforts to have General Greene's campaign duly commemorated at Guilford Court House by the General Government. As he points out in his article today, consistency demands that national recognition of the claims of Guilford's famous battle ground be given.

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### MONUMENT TO ROCHAMBEAU.

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*Editor of the Telegram:*

We find in the Congressional Record, in its issue of March 12th, instant, the proceedings following, for which Congress deserves and will receive the thanks of the country:

"Mr. Cullum reported a joint resolution authorizing and requesting the President to extend to the government and people of France and the family of General de Rochambeau an invitation to join the government and people of the United States in the dedication ceremonies of the monument to General de Rochambeau," \* \* \* This joint resolution was read the second time. It designates the 24th of May as the day of unveiling and appropriates \$20,000 for the entertainment of visitors, etc.

Mr. Hoar made an amendment so as to make the resolution read: "The families of Admiral Rochambeau and of Lafayette," to which there was no objection. Senator Hoar said "Lafayette stands in a relation to our war of Independence which no other person occupies and he has always had the gratitude and affection of the American people. \* \* \* The continental Congress after the peace of 1783 voted a monument to Lafayette, which vote was never carried out until within recent years;" "The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed

for a third reading, read the third time and passed." Final action on the resolution by Congress, it appears, will be made within a very few days and will, of course, be favorable. It is submitted that if the fortunate reapers—Washington, LaFayette and now Rochambeau and the harvest field itself—Yorktown—be, as they have been, properly commemorated, right and justice and consistency require that Greene and his campaign of 1781 who sowed the seed should also be commemorated at Guilford Court House. Thos. H. Benton said long ago that the less was father to the greater event. In other words, that the battle of Guilford Court House caused Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown, to which it is assumed every one informed in the history of the period assents. We appeal to Congress, especially to the Senators and Representatives of Rhode Island and North Carolina, and more especially still to the Representatives of this Congressional district, to see that a proper appropriation for this purpose is made, if possible, and made now.

Yours truly,

JOSEPH M. MOREHEAD,

Vice-President of the (N. C.) Guilford Battle Ground Co.

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If the remains of General Greene are now re-interred at Guilford that fact will materially and most favorably affect his fame throughout the ages to come. The present is therefore an important and decisive moment in the history of efforts to preserve and properly do justice to his memory.

I believe that if this famous old battlefield is now allowed to become the one manifestly most fitting tomb upon earth of the old Hero, the general government will here speedily erect a suitable monument to its great soldier.

I believe that then the general government will here soon make of this one hundred acres a National Revolutionary Park.



A few years ago, as published, the Senate voted \$25,000 to these grounds—\$5,000 for their improvement and \$20,000 for a memorial to General Greene. The bill was lost, as I was informed and believe, because when, late in the session, it was reached and called in the House, its friends being absent no one present championed the cause.

In the long ago, we all know, Thos. H. Benton pointed out that the philosophy of the battle of Guilford was not understood; that the battle of Guilford caused the surrender at Yorktown. To-day that philosophy is understood. The Congressional Record of the 12th of March instant shows that the fortunate and brave actors at Yorktown and that Yorktown itself have been properly commemorated, though tardily and but quite recently. Senator Pritchard is to-day putting forth his best efforts to do like justice to Greene at Guilford. I am personally assured by an authority high in the councils and confidence of the government at Washington that with the proper effort and proper presentation of the facts the free tender already made of this park will be accepted by the government. Can anyone doubt that the presence of Greene's honored dust upon these grounds, as his final resting place, will conduce wonderfully to effect this consummation devoutly to be wished? It is a wrong done General Greene himself and his descendants forever to bury him elsewhere. If the decision of this question be referred to the female descendants of General Greene their unbiased woman's sense of abstract right and justice will settle it instantaneously. General Greene's tomb would prove an adornment to Savannah, to Providence or to any other great city. It would constitute a part of the city, a part conducing to the glory of the city. At Guilford Battle Ground Park of one hundred acres, even the tombs of the two signers of the Declaration of Independence, July 4th, 1776, here now present over their honored dust, will be a part of General Greene: because he here reduced to reality their glorious dreamings; because everything, all things, here must point to the central figure and presiding genius of this spot.



The Hon. C. B. Aycock, Governor of North Carolina, and the Hon. James E. Boyd, Judge of the U. S. Court for the Western District of North Carolina, kindly furnish the letters hereto attached and which are heartily commended to the reader's perusal :

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA,  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

RALEIGH, N. C., April 2, 1902.

*My Dear Sir:* I concur with you entirely in your effort to secure the reinterment of the remains of General Greene at the Guilford Battle Ground. I hope that this may be done and that Congress will provide for a suitable monument to be erected there to his memory. The world has come to recognize that the battle of Guilford Court House was the turning point in the War of Independence and rendered Yorktown possible. There can be no more fitting place for the remains of General Greene than the ground on which that battle was fought. There can be no reason why Congress should not there erect a monument to his memory for it was there that he did the greatest service to the cause of liberty.

I am, with great respect,

Very truly yours,

C. B. AYCOCK.

*To Maj. Joseph M. Morehead,*  
*Greensboro, N. C.*

GREENSBORO, N. C., April 3, 1902.

*Jos. M. Morehead, Esq.,*  
*Vice President Guilford Battle Ground Co.,*  
*Greensboro, N. C.:*

*My Dear Sir:* I have read with great interest your communication in a recent issue of the *Charlotte Observer* relative to the re-interment of the remains of Gen. Nathanael Greene on the battle field of Guilford Court House. I most heartily concur in all you say about this matter, and hope that your suggestion will be adopted

by the relatives and friends of this distinguished patriot, who gave such effective service to the cause of liberty, and that it will meet the approval of all others who are interested in selecting a final resting place for his sacred ashes.

The culmination of Gen. Greene's notable campaign as commander of the Colonial forces in the South was at the battle of Guilford Court House, and here it was that he delivered to the British army a blow from which it never recovered, and which so crippled Cornwallis that within a short while thereafter he became an easy prey to Washington at Yorktown. I agree, therefore, that the most appropriate place for the remains of this illustrious revolutionary soldier is upon the spot where the battle of Guilford Court House was fought—upon the ground where Greene's prowess as a military leader was so eminently displayed.

Another thing: not only ought Greene to be buried at Guilford Court House, but the government of the United States ought, at once, to set about to erect a suitable monument to him. I see from your article in the *Telegram* that there is a proposition in Congress to appropriate twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to pay the expenses of the families of Rochambeau and LaFayette, who are invited guests from France, to witness the unveiling of a monument to the former on the 24th of May next. This is as it should be, and no true American will offer the least objection to this appropriation; but, while we are generously providing the means to do honor to foreigners who aided us in our struggle for independence, we should not forget what we owe to our own countrymen, by whose sacrifice and patriotism our great country was rescued from the British yoke, and the establishment of the best government on earth made possible.

Guilford Court House was one of the principal battles of the Revolution, and yet, but for the efforts of individuals, who have bought and reclaimed the ground upon

which it was fought, this celebrated battlefield would to-day be nothing more than a wilderness.

There should be an awakening in this country upon the subject of identifying, reclaiming and properly marking the fields upon which the battles of the American Revolution were fought. This duty, which should be regarded by all lovers of our country as imperative, has been too long neglected.

The government should not leave the battlefield of Guilford Court House to be taken care of by a few individuals, but the Congress should make an appropriation not only for the erection of a suitable monument to Gen. Nathanael Greene, but should also give enough money either to purchase the battlefield, put it in the condition it should be and maintain it as a public park, or at least appropriate a reasonable sum to aid the Company which owns and cares for it in their patriotic work.

Yours truly,

JAS. E. BOYD.

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